

## Policing Research and Evaluation: Fiscal Year 1997

### Introduction

Policing is undergoing a broad and dramatic transformation. The strategic shift toward community-oriented policing and problem-solving strategies has changed the ways in which police departments organize themselves, the strategies which departments employ to combat crime and disorder, and the types of partnerships formed in order to enhance effectiveness. As police departments continue to evolve in these new directions, they face an array of unanticipated problems and crimes that continually expands and shifts.

### Background

As the research and evaluation arm of the Department of Justice, the National Institute of

Justice (NIJ) has mounted a broad agenda to study these changes in policing. With support from the Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services (COPS), under authority of the Public Safety Partnership and Community Policing Act (Title I) of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (the Crime Act) [see 42 U.S.C. §3796dd-4, 3793 (c)(11)(B)], NIJ has already awarded a total of 101 grants in 1995 and 1996 totaling \$23.9 million to research and evaluate the consequences and implications of community-oriented policing. These grants included a national evaluation of community policing, evaluations of specific policing strategies, locally initiated police-researcher partnerships, and other research and evaluation initiatives. Lists of the studies funded by NIJ are available from the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at (800)-421-6770, at (202) 307-1480 and by fax at (202) 616-9249.

NIJ is trying to streamline its process to accommodate the volume of proposals anticipated under this and other Crime Act solicitations. Researchers can help in a significant way by sending NIJ a nonbinding letter of intent by July 11, 1997. The Institute will use these letters to forecast the numbers of peer panels it needs and to identify conflicts of interest among potential reviewers. There are three ways to send these letters. You can fill out the mailer on the last page of this solicitation. You can reach NIJ by Internet by sending e-mail to [tellnij@ncjrs.org](mailto:tellnij@ncjrs.org) and identifying the solicitation and section(s) you expect to apply for. You can write a letter with the same information to Policing Research and Evaluation: Fiscal Year 1997, 633 Indiana Avenue N.W., Room 303, Washington, DC 20531. Help us help you.

In 1997, NIJ will move a step closer toward the consolidation of the research evidence pertaining to community-oriented policing. As the cornerstone of NIJ's policing research activities for 1997, this solicitation challenges the research field to look beyond the current state of policing research and evaluation and to propose research endeavors that fill knowledge gaps, forge new theories of community-oriented policing, and test the persistent, the perennial, but also the newly emerging hypotheses regarding community-oriented policing.

This third year of funding for community-oriented policing research will provide up to \$9.0 million for research and evaluation. Among other more targeted policing research solicitations, this request for applications provides the broadest base for investigator-initiated research in policing. To that end, this

solicitation comprises five broad sections of research and evaluation on community-oriented policing. The **Evaluations** section asks what organizational/department-wide features constitute an effective community-oriented policing strategy? The section on **Problem-Solving Strategies** seeks research on problem-solving approaches applied to a wide range of crimes and public safety issues. Section III, **Partners in Policing**, focuses on the police agency's relationship to the community, other law enforcement agencies, and other criminal justice agencies. It also presents NIJ's plans for continued support for locally-initiated research partnerships (LIRP). Section IV presents an opportunity for research on the **Organizational Challenges** posed by the move toward community-oriented policing. Section V seeks applications on one of two **Integrating Themes** of policing research: the impact of technology, and police response to crime. A sixth section solicits research proposals linked to the Law Enforcement Family Support section of the Crime Act.

Each section provides examples of research projects that could be considered under this solicitation. These examples are illustrative, and researchers are strongly encouraged to develop proposals that present innovative approaches to the broad topical area of a given section.

While NIJ encourages potential applicants to identify the specific area under which their application should be considered, promising research applications that do not fit precisely within a given section of this research agenda or that cross over areas may still be considered.

## I. **Evaluations: Determining What Works in Community-Oriented Policing**

As an increasing number of police departments implement community-oriented policing, NIJ has supported the evaluation of these efforts.

The purpose of NIJ's evaluations is to assess the outcomes and impacts of specific practices in order to identify promising practices that can be implemented by other agencies. Selection of an important, promising practice, careful design of the evaluation, attention to confounding factors, and the generalizability of eventual findings are crucial ingredients in a successful evaluation proposal.

Under the authority of the Public Safety Partnership and Community Policing Act of the 1994 Crime Act, through the establishment of the Community-Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office, the U.S. Department of Justice has invested significant new resources to advance the implementation of community-oriented policing. As the Department's research agency, NIJ's responsibility in this effort is to evaluate the impact of community-oriented policing at both the local and national level. A multi-year national evaluation of community-oriented policing is already underway.

In this solicitation, NIJ seeks local evaluations that will contribute to our understanding of police agencies' efforts to move toward community-oriented policing. NIJ is particularly interested in learning of efforts to implement community-oriented policing across a variety of community settings including cities, rural communities, small towns, and sheriff's departments. In addition to understanding the process of implementing community-oriented policing, NIJ seeks evaluations that advance our understanding of the consequences of specific community-oriented policing strategies, practices, and styles including:

recruitment and training strategies; use of performance and reward structures, systems of discipline; the re-alignment or redefining of supervisory roles; and strategies that promote collaboration or resource-sharing with other public and private agencies and institutions.

Promising proposals that examine the consequences of specific community-oriented policing strategies, programs, and styles are encouraged, including:

- comparative studies of styles of community policing (e.g., special “community policing” units vs. general department-wide implementation of community-oriented policing)
- analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of centralization/decentralization of community-oriented policing supervision
- the impact of technological innovations and their utility for achieving community policing goals and strategies
- changes in evaluation approaches to better reflect and promote community policing

Successful applicants under this part of the solicitation will exhibit a clear understanding of the principles and processes of community-oriented policing, define a specific focus of study, stipulate a clearly delineated scope of investigation, and demonstrate the collaboration of one or more law enforcement agencies that will be the focus of the evaluation.

Under this evaluation section of the solicitation, grants will be made for up to 36 months. Multi-site research is encouraged, and long-term evaluations of individual departments will be considered. NIJ anticipates

supporting up to 7 awards of varying sizes totalling up to \$1.5 million.

## II. Promising Problem-Solving Strategies and Programs

Problem-solving strategies have emerged as an important ally to community-oriented policing. Typically, the problem-solving approach brings together comprehensive scanning, problem definition, solution development, implementation, and analysis skills to resolve a particular crime or disorder problem. While particular problems can be examined individually, NIJ is especially interested in proposals that focus on *inter-related sets* of crime and disorder problems. Problem-solving techniques can be employed as a comprehensive strategy for prioritizing a department’s entire range of operations and developing action plans for each problem identified; it can also be employed more tactically as a means of addressing a single selected crime or problem. In some instances, these problems are lower level problems of public disorder that can contribute to larger crime problems; in other cases, the focus may be on certain types of more serious crime, including violent crime.

NIJ is interested in the application of problem-solving strategies across a range of topics, including:

- firearms violence, especially among youth
- illegal gun markets
- gangs and gang violence
- the changing nature of drug markets
- family and intimate violence
- prostitution, panhandling, and other illegal street solicitations

- other predatory crimes, such as auto theft, auto robbery, and ATM-related robbery

NIJ also encourages studies that examine the application of problem-solving strategies in specific settings such as schools, public housing, transit facilities, shopping malls or centers, parking garages, rural locations, Native American reservations, or others. NIJ is also interested problem solving strategies which reveal and combat the specific nature of criminal enterprise: its organization, roots, tools and techniques.

Under this problem-solving section of the solicitation, grants will be made for up to 24 months. Multi-site research is encouraged. NIJ anticipates supporting up to 12 awards totaling up to \$2.0 million under this section of the solicitation.

### **III. Partnerships & Collaborations in Community-Oriented Policing: Co-Producers of Public Safety**

A central tenet of community-oriented policing is the partnership between law enforcement and the community in combating crime and public disorder. In a very real sense, community-oriented policing highlights the role of the community as co-producers with the police of public safety.

This section of the solicitation seeks research proposals that examine the partnership between the police and the community. It also promotes examination of other types of partnerships that emerge under community-oriented policing, including those with other criminal justice agencies such as courts,

corrections, probation, and parole, as well as partnerships that join together multiple law enforcement agencies.

This section also seeks proposals that continue the established tradition of locally-initiated research partnerships (LIRP).

#### **A. The Community as Co-producer of Public Safety**

The core relationship in community-oriented policing is the partnership between the police and the community served. This partnership manifests itself in the way in which problems are identified, the strategies identified for responding to crime and disorder, and the dialogue between police and community that guides and informs decision-making on an ongoing basis. Such partnerships have complex prerequisites. They must provide adequate mechanisms for communication between the police agency and the community. They must also anticipate special training and educational requirements for the police and the community. The community is often faced with new responsibilities for its own safety and welfare, and the police are likely to face new expectations for how it treats offenders as well as victims of crime. NIJ seeks to support research that helps to understand the rich variety, diverse qualities, and ultimate effectiveness of these partnerships.

Studies which examine the police-community partnership in specific community contexts are encouraged, including those which focus on or compare:

- heterogeneous communities

- changing or transitional communities and neighborhoods
- elderly or religiously segregated neighborhoods and communities
- public housing neighborhoods
- immigrant and multilingual communities

Studies which focus or examine the role of specific community-based groups and agents are also encouraged. Researchers may wish to develop studies which assess the way in which police interact with, respond to, and draw upon specific community actors including:

- community organizations
- religious institutions
- the business community and other components of the private sector
- local nonprofit social service agencies
- other government and public service agencies

## **B. Partnerships with Other LE Agencies**

Many geographic areas are served by multiple law enforcement agencies with jurisdictions that overlap. At a minimum, these overlapping agencies are likely to include Federal, State and local law enforcement. They may extend to include other agencies with a variety of more limited responsibilities such as park, housing, or transit police. Finally, public law enforcement in many communities shares its field of operation with an increasing proliferation of private police. Imperative to successful policing is an understanding of how these agencies cooperate and coordinate activities to control crime and preserve public safety.

NIJ wishes to promote research into collaborative law enforcement and policing among agencies. Topics of interest include:

- types of formal and informal agreements among agencies
- obstacles to effective partnerships
- means of communication among agencies
- coordination between public and private police
- means of resolving jurisdictional boundaries and limits
- public police officers in private service

## **C. Partnerships with Other CJ Agencies**

Police agencies have always had a kinship with some other elements of the criminal justice system. In particular, prosecutors' offices and police have often performed related duties in guarding the public's safety and interests. Recently, criminal justice theorists and practitioners have begun to question the potential for new types of criminal justice partnerships involving the police. In particular, NIJ wishes to explore ways in which the police could perform effectively in concert with courts, corrections, probation, and parole agencies, especially when these activities might reduce reoffending and enhance public safety overall. Jurisdictions where police have established innovative ways of coordinating their operations with courts, corrections, probation, or parole offices could give important new insights to others considering similar programs. Research on these partnerships could generate valuable lessons in making police agencies more responsive and more effective.

Under parts A, B, and C of this section of the solicitation, grants will be made for up to 24 months. NIJ anticipates supporting up to 7 awards totaling up to \$1.25 million under this section of the solicitation.

## **D. Locally-Initiated Research Partnerships**

NIJ recognizes that in order for police practitioners and scholars to improve the law enforcement profession, sound research and program evaluations are needed. Community policing has increased police executives' reliance upon research to analyze problems, design solutions and assess consequences. Increasingly, this reliance has taken the form of a local partnership between police and community-based policing researchers. These partnerships are a natural outgrowth of the community-oriented policing partnership that the police agency forms with the community, and it reflects the strengths, interests, and concerns of the local community. Such partnerships often yield a double return on the investment: they frequently provide valuable substantive findings on a chosen issue applicable in other communities, but they also serve as important "templates" for police agencies wishing to initiate their own local research partnership.

This marks the third year that NIJ, in its own partnership with COPS, has invited proposals for locally initiated research partnerships. As in 1996, NIJ encourages applicants seeking an initial year of planning funding or a second year of support for research activities. (Police agencies who have received two years of funding under this section of previous NIJ solicitations are not eligible to apply again.)

Applicants are required to submit a task outline for the duration of the proposed project including the design of one or more research studies. Since NIJ believes that documentation of the development of the partnership is critical information, the application must also include a plan to document the planning, implementation, development, and achievements of the research collaboration. Applications should include signed agreements among all parties, detailing specific tasks and duties of all participating

agencies. NIJ is supporting a national evaluation of the locally initiated partnerships. Selected grantees are required to participate in this evaluation.

Successful applicants under this part of the solicitation will effectively convey the collaborative nature and strength of the partnership, the importance of the research task at hand, and the ability of each member to substantially contribute to the research enterprise. Proposals will be evaluated on the mechanisms built into the research plan that allow routine and informal feedback of research findings to the police agency that may pinpoint potential implementation problems, biases or threats to either the validity or reliability of the research findings.

Under the Locally-initiated partnership research section, grants will be made for up to 18 months. NIJ anticipates supporting up to 10 research partnerships totaling up to \$1.25 million under this section of the solicitation.

#### **IV. Organizational Issues in Community Policing**

Shifts and changes in the landscape of criminal behavior and criminal enterprise challenge the ability of community-oriented policing agencies to respond and adapt. Perhaps more importantly, community-oriented policing poses a very real challenge to the integrity of the police organization. This section focuses on the impact of community-oriented policing on the organization, structure, operations, and procedures of the police agency.

Any organization experiences stress during times of rapid or dramatic change. As community-oriented policing has taken root in more police agencies, these agencies have faced

a number of organizational challenges. Some of these challenges have been to long-held assumptions about appropriate command and supervisory structure; methods of evaluation and paths of promotion; the need for diversity in a police agency; and the management of time, space (geography), and staffing.

Many police agencies have significantly altered the functions of police officers and operational units as a result of the shift to community-oriented policing. Increasingly, police and communities are recognizing the importance of citizens to address crime and disorder. More and more, police agencies are assessing the advantage of redesigning organizational structures and administrative processes to allow officers appropriate levels of discretion and flexibility in their complex community environments. Persistent problems of policing, such as the unwarranted use of force and the issue of police integrity, take on new significance in departments where community-oriented policing has brought officers into closer partnership with (and sharper scrutiny by) the community they serve.

NIJ wishes to support research which analyzes the organizational changes that occur as a result of community-oriented policing. This research might include:

- trends in labor contracts and negotiations as departments begin to adopt different tactical or deployment strategies
- specifics of policies and procedures governing assignments, overtime, scheduling, manning levels, and types of activities
- relationships between members of the labor organizations, associations and management
- women and minorities in policing

- advantages and disadvantages of shift-based vs. geographic-based command structures
- stress in community-oriented policing (see Section VI on LEFS research)
- the use of force in a community-oriented policing context
- maintaining agency integrity under community-oriented policing

The successful applicant in this section of the solicitation may focus on an emerging criminal pattern or practice and assess the efficacy of community-oriented policing practices in combating this emerging problem. Alternately, the successful applicant may wish to examine the consequences of community-oriented policing and the problems and challenges for the policing organization that attend the shift toward community-oriented policing. Under this section of the solicitation, grants will be made for up to 24 months. Multi-site research is encouraged, and long-term evaluations of individual departments will be considered. NIJ anticipates supporting up to 12 awards totaling up to \$2.0 million under this section of the solicitation.

## V. Integrative Themes for Community-Oriented Policing Research

In this section NIJ introduces two integrative themes around which a number of basic principles and issues of community-oriented policing converge. NIJ proposes these themes as innovative points of entry into theories and analyses of community-oriented policing. Applicants are encouraged to develop innovative approaches and research designs which employ one of these themes as a means of examining the fundamental processes and issues of community-oriented policing.

### A. The Impact of Technology on Policing

Technology is often double-edged: it accelerates productivity, but makes outdated many previously essential skills. It enhances communication, but it may also sequester the voices of some not properly trained. It can enhance security, but it can also result in a misplaced confidence in the integrity, reliability, and resilience of the technology. Just as in any other human endeavor in which new technological developments have rapidly expanded, this is true for technology in policing.

NIJ has a long tradition in the development and testing of new criminal justice technologies. In 1997, NIJ wishes to examine the social, organizational, and behavioral implications of technology in the context of community-oriented policing.

Understanding the infusion, transfer, and impact of technology on police officers, managers, the organization and community is critically important in determining the future directions of technology development and its utilization. Though substantial literature and knowledge exists about technology development, the same cannot be said about the infusion and impact of technology regarding the needs of policing. The effect of technology on the increasing merging of functions, interactions and the needs of the police has been only infrequently examined.

NIJ seeks proposals that explore the dynamics of the technology infusion process in police agencies that have adopted community policing and problem-oriented policing focusing on behavioral, operational and organizational consequences of technology. Research under this part of the solicitation should focus on the implications of technology use on the

organizational and operational structure of the police agency.

### **B. Changing How Police Respond**

How -- and when -- police respond to crime and citizens' reports of crime is a critical part of the agency's public persona. It figures significantly in the community's perceptions of the police. Beyond community perceptions, it is in fact a key element in the agency's effectiveness in fighting crime. Police agencies have a wide range of organizing principles to guide their allocation of resources in responding to calls for service. Agencies have employed various models of police service delivery to achieve the demands of community policing. Some agencies have organized their resources on an agency-wide basis, while others have employed a split-force approach. Most agencies continue to utilize some specialized units to field certain types of calls for service. Tremendous resources have been invested in automated systems that field requests for service and dispatch officers. Simultaneously, police agencies have sought new ways of connecting with the community in order to enhance their responsiveness to community concerns.

At the same time, police agencies and their communities struggle with the limits of a reactive orientation to crime and disorder. Increasingly, the police are being called on to play a proactive, preventive role in ensuring the safety of the community.

For all these reasons, the concept of "police response" is an engaging notion on which to center studies and discussions of community-oriented policing. NIJ seeks innovative approaches to this research topic that help to illuminate the broad field of police operations.

Under this section of the solicitation, grants will be made for up to 24 months. Multi-site research is encouraged. NIJ anticipates supporting up to 7 awards totaling up to \$1.0 million under this section of the solicitation.

## **VI. Law Enforcement and Family Support**

Section 210201 of the Crime Act, “Law Enforcement Family Support,” 42 U.S.C. § 379 *et seq.*, will assist Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies to develop and implement policies and programs to reduce stress and promote family well-being through programs of research, training, technical assistance, and financial support.

In response to this legislation, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is providing program funds to support *research and evaluation* in the area of stress in law enforcement. NIJ will also provide support for *demonstration and training* programs through an accompanying solicitation (see box).

The pervasive nature of job-related stress in law enforcement was highlighted in 1986 when a nationwide assessment of law enforcement training needs found that State and local officers in all types and sizes of agencies ranked the need for training in personal stress management as the highest priority. Reported negative consequences included high rates of alcohol abuse, marital difficulties, domestic violence, stress-related health problems, disability retirements, and ultimately suicide. An increasing number of departments, particularly in larger jurisdictions, now operate various forms of stress reduction and employee assistance programs, in some cases also making program services available to officers’ families. It should be noted that an important aspect of the Law Enforcement Family support

legislation (section 210201 of the Crime Act) is the emphasis it places on family well-being and the provision of stress reduction and support services, not only to law enforcement officers, but also to members of their families.

Rigorous studies are needed about the extent and nature of the problem as it affects officers, their families, and law enforcement agencies. Areas of research interest include, but are not limited to:

- Organizational contributors to stress, including community policing.
- The relationship of career stage to stress.
- The issue of family violence among police
- The relative effectiveness of different program elements, particularly cost-effective approaches to stress reduction.
- The optimal organizational arrangements to promote officers’ acceptance and use of stress-related services.
- Identification of services most needed and/or desired by officers and their families.
- Feasible programs for small or rural agencies.

The National Institute of Justice is issuing an additional solicitation this year on the topic of law enforcement family support under Title XXI of the 1994 Crime Act. The purpose of this related effort is to develop and demonstrate (a) exemplary models of innovative stress reduction programs for State and local law enforcement personnel *and their families*, or alternatively, (b) a model training program, with a strategy for disseminating it nationally, that State and local law enforcement agencies can use in training their trainers in how to establish effective stress reduction programs.

Respondents interested in this related effort are encouraged to obtain a copy of NIJ's solicitation, *Demonstration and Training Programs for the Reduction of Stress Among Law Enforcement Officers and Their Families*, by contacting the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770, at 202-307-1480, or by fax at 202-616-9249.

NIJ expects to support one or two research awards totaling \$100,000 under this section of the solicitation.

## VII. How to Apply

Those interested in submitting proposals in response to this solicitation must complete the required application forms and submit related required documents. (See below for how to obtain application forms and guides for completing proposals.) Applicants must include the following information/forms to qualify for funding:

- Standard Form (SF) 424—application for Federal assistance
- Assurances
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (one form)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Budget Detail Worksheet
- Negotiated indirect rate agreement (if appropriate)
- Names and affiliations of all key persons from applicant and subcontractor(s), advisors, consultants, and advisory board members. Include

name of principal investigator, title, organizational affiliation (if any), department (if institution of higher education), address, phone, and fax.

- Proposal abstract
- Table of contents
- Program narrative or technical proposal
- Privacy certificate, as appropriate
- References
- Letters of cooperation from organizations collaborating in the research project.
- Résumés
- Appendixes, if any (e.g., list of previous NIJ awards, their status, and products [in NIJ or other publications]).

The Institute has established a limit of 30 double-spaced pages for all normal grant applications. This page limit does not include references, budget narrative, curriculum vitae, or necessary appendices. Applications for small grants (\$1,000 - \$50,000) are limited to 15 double spaced pages. NIJ does not wish to create elaborate regulations regarding type fonts, margins, and spacing. Applicants are cautioned, however, that obvious attempts to stretch interpretations of the Institute's limits have, in the past, caused proposal reviewers to regard such efforts unfavorably.

**Due Date.** Completed proposals must be received at the National Institute of Justice by the close of business on August 1, 1997. Extensions of this deadline will not be permitted.

**Guidance and Information.** Applicants may wish to discuss their potential research topics with NIJ program staff. Those who wish to do so should contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770. Center staff can provide additional guidance and information to potential applicants or refer them to an appropriate NIJ professional.

**Obtaining Application Forms .** To obtain application forms (including a sample budget worksheet) and guidelines for submitting proposals (including requirements for proposal writers and requirements for grant recipients), applicants can:

- Access the Justice Information Center on the Web:  
<http://www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.htm#NIJ>. At this site, the NIJ application forms and guidelines are available as electronic files that may be downloaded to a personal computer.
- Request hard copies of the forms and guidelines by mail from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 800-851-3420 or from the Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770 (in the Washington, D.C., area, at 202-307-1480).
- Request copies by fax. Call 800-851-3420 and select option 1, then option 1 again for NIJ. Code is 1023.

Send completed forms to:

Policing Research and Evaluation: Fiscal Year 1997  
[Insert Section Number Application Applicable]  
National Institute of Justice

633 Indiana Avenue N.W., Room 303  
Washington, DC 20531